



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Fire and Aviation
3833 S Development Ave
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354
<http://www.nifc.gov>



March 12, 2014

In Reply Refer To:
9210 (FA600) P

EMS Transmission 03/13/2014
Instruction Memorandum No. FA IM-2014-010
Expires: 09/30/2015

To: State and Center Directors

From: Acting Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Subject: Spatial Fire Planning in the Wildland Fire Decision Support System

Program Area: Fire Planning, Fuels Management, Fire Operations

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) authorizes units to utilize the Spatial Fire Planning (SFP) process in the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS), and describes the criteria units must meet to utilize the SFP process. This IM also rescinds previous guidance issued in IM No. FA IM-2013-018, and augments direction provided in the Bureau of Land Management Fire Planning Manual (MS-9211) and Fire Planning Handbook (H-9211-1).

Policy/Action: The Wildland Fire Decision Support System is the decision support tool used by the BLM to integrate fire management objectives and requirements into wildfire decisions. To date, this information has been non-spatially displayed as narrative statements for each Fire Management Unit (FMU). The current version of WFDSS (4.11) now allows users to spatially depict these management requirements and objectives. Use of this process requires WFDSS Data Managers to spatially define and upload polygons having unique management requirements, such as suppression guidance or constraints. In the SFP process, Strategic Objective shapes replace Fire Management Unit shapes. These polygons are managed at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC). Bureau of Land Management use of the SFP process in WFDSS is optional. Offices not electing the SFP process in 2014 will continue to use the FMU process within WFDSS.

Bureau of Land Management Units must meet the following criteria to use the SFP process in WFDSS:

1. State fire management officers approve of conversion to the SFP process for the unit(s). This approval will be based on the ability of the unit(s) to convert prior to fire season;
2. The data used in the SFP process, including polygons and textual information, are NEPA compliant (i.e., there are no new decisions made);

3. Management Requirement shapes, and the associated text, are developed and ready for local upload;
4. Strategic Objective codes (formerly FMU codes in the non-spatial process) are consistent with attributes in the associated shapes. These will be revised by data managers if needed;
5. Existing FMU shapes within WFDSS have been reviewed for accuracy prior to implementing. If FMU shapes are inaccurate, new shapes must be submitted to Dianna Sampson, FA600 Geospatial Analyst, no later than March 25, 2014;
6. Units will comply with SFP guidance contained in the WFDSS Spatial Fire Planning Guide (attachment 1).

The timeline for adoption of the SFP process is as follows:

Action	Due Date	Responsible Party
WFDSS Data Managers at Field/District Offices upload management requirement shapes and verify strategic objective codes	3/25/14	WFDSS Data Managers at Field/District Offices
Data Managers at Field/District Offices provide NIFC with updated Strategic Objective shapes	3/25/14	WFDSS Data Managers at Field/District Offices
NIFC provides Strategic Objective shapes to WFDSS	4/8/14	FA600 Analyst Dianna Sampson
Wildland Fire Research Development and Application Unit uploads BLM Strategic Objective into production environment	4/14/14	Wildland Fire Research Development and Applications Unit

Timeframe: This IM is effective immediately.

Budget Impact: Moderate costs will be incurred as early adopting offices complete data preparation and uploading.

Background: Since 2008, BLM offices have integrated FMU polygons, non-spatial strategic objectives, and non-spatial management requirements from Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and Fire Management Plans (FMPs) into WFDSS. The intent of this information is consistency between RMPs, FMPs, and real-time strategic decisions. After 5 years of experience, BLM feedback has identified the following limitations to the WFDSS FMU planning process: redundancy in WFDSS reports, objectives that appear to be in conflict within large FMUs, and non-spatial management guidance. Adopting the SFP process in WFDSS will reduce these inefficiencies.

Spatial fire management planning is the broad category of efforts to utilize geospatial data in fire management planning. Some BLM offices have initiated efforts to develop Spatial Fire Management Plans (SFMP), under the guidance of the National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG) Interagency Fire Planning Committee. However, these efforts are different from those described here and should not be confused. The WFDSS SFP planning process is a subset of spatial fire management planning. The intent of SFP in WFDSS is to spatially display management direction, improve planning efficiency, display unique management guidance for small areas, and encourage cross-agency coordination.

The 2014 fire season signals the first time BLM offices will be allowed to utilize SFP in the production environment of WFDSS (Attachment 1 is a technical guide to the SFP process). It is anticipated that at least three BLM States may have offices electing to be early adopters of the SFP process. In subsequent years, experience gained by early adopters will be highly important as other offices choose this option. Offices not electing the SFP process in 2014 will continue to use the FMU process within WFDSS.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: This IM supplements guidance in the 2014 *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations* (Red Book), and rescinds Instruction Memorandum No. FA IM-2013-018. In addition, this IM augments the BLM Fire Planning Manual (MS-9211) and the BLM Fire Planning Handbook (H-9211-1).

Coordination: This IM has been coordinated with the Division of Fire Operations (FA300), the Division of Fire Planning and Fuels Management (FA600), State WFDSS leads, and the Wildland Fire Research, Development and Applications Unit.

Contact: Questions may be directed to Doug Havlina, Fire Ecologist, 208-387-5061, or Brad Washa, Acting Division Chief, 208-387-5198.

Signed by:
Howard Hedrick, acting
Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:
Kris King
Records Manager

Attachment
1 - WFDSS Spatial Fire Planning Guide (27 pp)

Distribution:
BLM_ADs
BLM_FA_FLT
BLM_Library
Doug Havlina (FA600)
Jeff Arnberger (FA300)
Brad Washa (FA600)